



Jonathan Vieira again provides a thrilling evening of music at the Cas di Cultura

Sunday night, August 27, the Cas di Cultura was the venue for a varied program by Aruba's own Jonathan Vieira, concert pianist and composer, who is carving out a career in music in New York City. Jonathan returned home after a three-year hiatus to perform a benefit concert for the Aruba chapter of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, which describes itself as "a worldwide group sharing the common quality of humanity, without any distinctions." The Aruban members are the inventors of a game that has been translated into over fifteen languages and distributed around the world called "The Moral Compass," which provides an entertaining and inventive means for children to develop a respect for the qualities that build a healthy society.

Joining Jonathan on the stage were his long time friends, Miles Kennedy on the drums and Steve Hoevertsz, a guitarist from Aruba that is also studying and performing in the United States. Miles is also the producer for a number of Jonathan's work, and has experience with noted performers such as Neil Diamond. The first half of the evening's program was almost entirely devoted to solo performances by Jonathan, interspersed with friendly patter with the audience, and reminiscences of his Aruban upbringing. A varied selection of more conventional music for the piano such as "Ballad for Adelaide" and a contemporary waltz that Jonathan wrote for a friend dominated. Padu Lampe was in the audience to hear a rendition of his composition "A Bo So," which was so familiar to the audience that they sang along as Jonathan played this tribute to a man that has inspired him in his music.

During the second half of the program, Timothy O'Kane, who appeared with him in Aruba three years ago, joined Jonathan on stage. Their seven year partnership has resulted in not only some lively interpretations of the work of Elton John and Billy Joel, but also original music that they performed on Sunday evening. One of the songs, "You Want to Memorize this" was written specifically for this concert, and another ballad, "Feels Like We are Home" particularly stirred the audience, and has all the makings of a hit song.

Jonathan Vieira is better known to Arubans for his compositions that are based on local folkloric music, but Sunday's concert was a departure, with a display from the pop music icons that have also influenced the young performer. Songs from The Beatles, Billy Joel, Elton John and others, aside from original works comprised the second half of the evening and gave Jonathan an opportunity to really display his talent. Visiting concert pianist from New York, Elise Sobel, who was in the audience, commented, "This young man has a huge career ahead of him, if he does not have one already."

Unfortunately, Jonathan and his friends departed for the U.S. the next day, only able to give the one concert, leaving his audience and compatriots hopeful that he will not be so long between performances on Aruba again.